



An official publication from the City of Hickory, North Carolina

January 2012

City Snippets *Connecting you to the city*

2011 yields new opportunities to craft a fruitful city

Hickory persevered throughout 2011 which turned out to be a year of positive steps in economic development, planning, and more. Information in this edition of the *City Snippets* is just a fraction of the 2011 successes. To learn more, go to www.hickorync.gov and click on to 2011 Hickory Highlights.

Economic Development Announcements

In 2011, four large companies chose to relocate to Hickory, and one new company exceeded expectations. In total, the new companies will invest \$21.5 million in building and equipment and create 565 jobs over the next five years. The companies include:

- Fairmont Designs, a case goods and upholstery producer, located its east coast operations in Hickory, and will create 200 new jobs during the next four years with a minimum investment of \$1.5 million. Fairmont Designs acquired a former furniture facility, and manufactures upholstered furniture in this location.
- Stewart Superabsorbants relocated to Catawba Industrial Commons. Stewart Superabsorbants consolidated from multiple facilities and is the pre-eminent supplier of CABLOC® brand superabsorbent polyacrylates to the wire and cable industry. The anticipated investment is approximately \$500,000 and 15 jobs.
- Turbocoating, a European market leader in coatings for the gas turbine industry, chose Hickory as the location for its first United States Operation center. The company will create 110 new jobs and will invest \$15 million over the next five years.

This facility will provide specialized services for parts used in the gas turbine engines produced by Siemens, GE, Alstom and Rolls Royce.



Turbocoating

- Punker, which was just announced in December, will be in the former Turbotec building in southeast Hickory. The level of investment will be \$4.5 million in machinery and equipment and create 62 to 80 jobs over the next five years. Punker is a privately held German company founded in 1954 and headquartered in Eckernförde, Germany, that manufactures fan wheels and blowers for over 1,000 customers on every continent and for more than 100 different market sectors such as cooling systems, roof fans, dust/smoke extraction and commercial ovens. They specialize in producing centrifugal impellers and cross - flow fan wheels.
- Convergys exceeded expectations and added 160 new jobs. The company employed 675 people, and when the firm opened in 2008, it promised to create 446 new jobs by the end of 2011. The Ohio-based call center for telecommunications companies, has grown and by the end of 2011 there were a total of 835 jobs.

Upcoming City Council Meetings

**January 3 & 17
February 7 & 21**

Hickory City Council
Julian G. Whitener
Municipal Building
7 p.m.
hickorync.gov

Sign up for Hickory's
City and Parks and
Recreation e-newsletters
by going to
hickorync.gov.

Quick Facts 2011

- Hickory Police Department dispatched 62,810 calls for service.
- Hickory Fire Department responded to 4,988 calls.
- Hickory Public Library had 400, 574 visitors and 460,002 items were checked out.
- Parks and Recreation staff conducted 1,254 programs and activities.
- Planning and Development issued 800 zoning permits, and conducted 400 fire and safety inspections.
- Public Utilities provided 4.85 billion gallons of water to utility customers, at an average of 13.3 million gallons of water per day.

Planning for the future

Activities in 2011 included tweaking and enhancing planning documents to building a new waste water treatment plant to branding initiatives.

- Hickory By Choice 2030, along with an updated Land Development Code, and Zoning Map were accepted by City Council in early 2011. HBC 2030 is a true comprehensive plan, which means chapters include more than just planning and transportation, it also includes recreation facilities, economic development, and more. The LDC complements HBC 2030.
- Northeast Waste Water Treatment Plant (NEWWTP) construction began in the summer of 2010 and is expected to be complete by spring of 2012. The existing facility is more than 40 years old and operational until the new facility is complete. The \$21.6 million project has been in the planning and design process for almost a decade.
- Hickory's Business Development Committee along other key players were and continue to be instrumental in the branding project that began in the fall of 2010. After a year of research and strategy, Hickory's CommunityBrand-Print has been accepted and city staff, BDC volunteers, community organizations, businesses and more

are building partnerships to move "Hickory, North Carolina—Life. Well Crafted" campaign forward.

Community Partnerships

- The Kiwanis Clubs of Catawba County spearheaded a campaign to raise money to build an All-Children's Playground at Kiwanis Park in honor of the late Zahra Baker. The original goal was \$85,000 and by the end of 2011, more than \$200,000 was raised for the playground. The playground includes an array of equipment in which all children of all abilities can play together. Volunteers will help build the playground in the spring of 2012.

Awards

- Hickory earns the prestigious Playful City USA 2011 award. The recognition is from the national non-profit KaBOOM! and awarded for the city's efforts to increase play opportunities for children. In addition to the award, Hickory received a \$20,000 grant to go toward the Zahra Baker Playground.
- The North Carolina Library Directors Association awarded the Hickory Public Library with its 2011 Library Programming Award for Medium-sized Cities. The "Where in the World is Lucy" program was nominated for this award. Lucy is a "Paws to Read" dog.